

now to the great study of the Negro people as they are to-day, and we desire that this discussion shall, as far as possible, have reference to the situation as it is affected and as it may be affected by a knowledge of the Bible and to what are the needs of his religious life and his social life.

The Conversion of a Great Race

Address of Dr. John E. White at the Beginning of the Second Day of the Clifton Conference, August 19, 1908

OUR discussion yesterday evening rapidly veered from the consideration of facts and condition of the Negro's religious situation to the practical outlook upon the work of improving it.

It was, however, brought out in good relief that there has come about a change in the situation of the matter in the attitude of the southern white people towards those engaged in work for the Negro of the South. It was also brought into relief that any work for the Negro in the South must be done in coöperation with the materials at hand and never irrespective of the white people in the South.

It was developed also as an important fact that the Negro had developed initiative and the capacity for religious administration, and that was held up as one of the facts which was to be kept in view in whatever work we undertake. It was also clearly outlined that the Negroes are gathered into different religious organizations or denominations, and that any work which is done must have regard to these lines, and that the progress of the Negro must be laid with reference to these lines.

We come now to consider work that is being done already, for the purpose of seeing if there are any agencies already in operation, any system already in use, which may be utilized in the larger and more comprehensive work, and to consider what can be brought to bear upon

"The Moral Condition of the Masses"

of the Negroes of the South for the purpose of utilizing the reservoir of Sunday-school power which is seeking to find an opening for making itself felt in this great work.

This is to be President's Day, if I may characterize it with any accent at all. We are to hear from college presidents, from people who have given their time and labor for years to this problem, and I trust that it will be brought out in your talks that since these men, many of them white men, have given long

years of devotion to this cause, that there must exist an adequate need on the part of the Negro to demand such consecration and devotion; and that there will be an understanding which will be apparent to all who gather here as leaders of the white and black people, that there does exist among the Negroes of the South a great necessity, and that necessity involves

"The Salvation of a Race"

It is not to be said that the Negro is not equal to the situation. It is not to be said that his capacity is inadequate, but I like to adopt an expression which I learned from my good friend, Dr. Frost, in his book on the mountain people: "They are not degraded but are just not yet graded up." This discussion this morning should be a very important one and should lead us clearly into an intelligent grasp of the situation and also into the grasp of opportunity.

This Historic Conference

Closing Address of Dr. John E. White, President of the Clifton Conference, August 19, 1908

MAY I be permitted to say, in gratitude to you for the great honor that has been conferred upon me in allowing me to preside over this historic Conference, that it marks, I feel, an epoch in my personal life.

I have never had any prejudice against the Negro. My father was a Confederate captain, soldier, and a Democrat, and he bequeathed to me a great many things; but he never dared to bequeath to me a single prejudice, and I am grateful to him for that above all things. I never heard him say anything bitter against the Yankee, or the Yankee generals, or the Yankee soldiers that caused me to lack, in any degree, appreciation of the heroism of the brave men of the federal army; but, on the contrary, he led me to believe they must have been brave men to have "licked him" as they did occasionally.

I have never had any prejudice against the Negro; on the contrary, I have had a "kind of leaning that way" ever since the Negroes belonging to my mother and my grandfather were the patrons of my youth and their boys were my playmates. Why, my only brother was born in the very house in which the Missionary Training School of Shaw University is now located in Raleigh, N. C.